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House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SALAZAR).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 5, 2009.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN T. SALAZAR to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

PORTLAND'S STREETCAR EXTENSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last week's decision by the Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood to authorize \$75 million in Federal funds to extend Portland's streetcar was not just important news for our community, although it was welcome. Indeed, it's going to create over 1,200 new jobs, construction starting almost immediately.

It's going to help serve as a magnet for development for a broad swath of

our community. But it is important for what it symbolizes as the potential for a new partnership with the Federal Government for the reintroduction of the modern streetcar into our communities across the country.

One hundred and twenty years ago, streetcars were very much in evidence here in Washington, DC and, indeed, from coast to coast. You could travel from Boston, Massachusetts, to Chicago, all but about 13 miles, uninterrupted, on streetcars and interurban electric systems. These streetcars shaped our modern communities with an efficient mechanism for transportation. People liked them, and it was something that helped develop housing and downtown density.

Over the course of this last decade, I am proud of the role our community has played helping to launch the first modern streetcar in the United States that is serving as a model for what can happen across the country. Our first line has already been extended three times. It has attracted over \$3.5 billion of new development, millions of passengers and, very important, the trips that aren't being taken by automobile, saving carbon pollution, fighting congestion, saving people money.

The decision by the Department of Transportation to administer the small starts legislation that I authored in the last reauthorization means that we can spread these benefits all across the country. There are dozens of cities, Boise, Idaho; Washington, DC; Tucson; Fort Lauderdale; Charlotte; Cincinnati; Des Moines; Miami; Providence, Rhode Island; New Haven, Connecticut; Seattle, Salt Lake.

The list is extensive of communities that are poised and ready to go with a modest amount of investment. The streetcar costs a fraction of what a light rail system would do. Our initial streetcar costs less than 1 mile of urban freeway.

But it's important to think about the ripple effects across the country. Not

only can you think multiplication of the 1,200 construction jobs that we have in Portland that could be visited in these communities, just on laying the tracks, reshaping the landscape, relocating the utilities, but it also is going to be a magnet for the development on the adjacent property. This is something that is a signal to developers large and small about a transportation alternative.

Then there is the opportunity for the first time in 58 years to have a modern American streetcar manufactured in the United States. We have developed in the City of Portland a prototype car that is being manufactured locally that's being delivered to this new project. Each streetcar results in 15 additional manufacturing jobs in our community, but also another 15 jobs per car for subcontractors across America. I have a list of subcontractors from coast-to-coast, particularly in the hard-hit manufacturing areas of the upper Midwest where machine shops are going to be providing parts for this modern American streetcar.

Mr. Speaker, this is an opportunity for this Congress and the new administration to build on the promise, not just to have a streetcar line extended in the City of Portland, but to start a modern industry of rail transport, taking us back to the future, with the tram, with the trolley, with the streetcar, whatever one wants to call it, that will have a transformational effect on our communities while it helps revitalize our economy.

UYGHURS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) for 5 minutes.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I was the author of legislation in 1998 that created the National Commission on Terrorism, whose report and recommendations were, unfortunately, ignored by both the Clinton and the Bush administration prior to 9/11.

Fast forward to today, and you can understand my concern when I hear that Attorney General Eric Holder is preparing to release trained terrorists into the United States. Several media outlets have been reporting that a decision is imminent on the release of Uyghurs presently detained at Guantanamo Bay. These detainees have been held at Guantanamo Bay since 2002 after being captured at terrorist training camps affiliated with al Qaeda.

Information I have received indicates these detainees may be far more dangerous than this administration has led the American people to believe. These detainees have been taught how to kill and terrorize by the same terrorist networks affiliated with the attacks on September 11, the USS Cole, U.S. embassies in Africa and the brutal beheading of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl. Yet Eric Holder is considering releasing them into the United States.

Both the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security have reportedly raised concerns about the release of these detainees, who are members of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement, a terrorist organization affiliated with al Qaeda. But yet Eric Holder will not release the information.

Let me be clear, we are not talking about transferring these people to prisons in the United States. They would be released free and clear to roam through your neighborhood, shop in your shopping malls and go wherever they want to.

And yet the Congress has not been briefed on this. We have called for briefings from numerous agencies but have been told by the agencies that the Attorney General's office will not allow them to come to the Hill.

This is, in some respects, basically a cover-up. That's right, the Justice Department will not allow career FBI and other government officials, who understand the issue, to come to the Congress to tell the Congress who these people are and what information has been prepared.

During his appearance before the Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Subcommittee, the Attorney General promised he would not play "hide and seek." Now he is hiding. He is hiding and keeping information from the Congress, and, more importantly, because the Congress doesn't appear to be doing anything about this, keeping the information from the American people.

All information, Mr. Speaker, about the capture and the detention of the detainees should be declassified, including a threat assessment for each detainee who would be released into the U.S. The American people need to

see this information, all of it should be released.

Eric Holder cannot just pick and choose what classified information he wants to release, only that which justifies his case, and cover up and keep quiet the others. These people should not be released into the United States.

Would you want to have trained terrorists living in your neighborhood? The answer is no, and I believe that Congress also is shirking its responsibility for not getting this information before a decision has been made.

MOVING IN A NEW DIRECTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. RICHARDSON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, the 111th Congress is moving in a new direction, a new direction with our clean energy jobs plan. Americans all over this country, whether you are from my home State of California or all the way over in Ohio, whether you are an ironworker or a teacher, whether you are retired or temporarily unemployed, Americans all know that we are facing a crisis, a crisis in our economic plan, a crisis with energy and a crisis with our climate.

The Democrats in this Congress have a solution that's a jobs generator and a money saver that will properly address each of these problems. The Democratic solution is our clean energy plan. The Democratic plan invests in clean energy jobs that can't be shipped overseas, in saving money for families and businesses through efficiency, and ending, finally, our addiction to foreign oil.

Republican opponents simply refuse to acknowledge the cause and the magnitude of this problem, and Republicans fail to acknowledge the change required today for the opportunity of growing jobs in this new economy. The U.S. has lost and is currently losing clean energy jobs and market share to China, Germany and Korea.

The U.S. consumers continue to spend \$400 billion, that's billion with a B, a year in the Middle East and Venezuela every time we fill up our gas tanks. Fortunately, Democrats in this Congress are working to fix this decade-old problem.

President Obama and the House Democrats have a plan that gets the economy moving again, retooling manufacturing plants, building wind turbine solar panels and clean cars and creating a smart grid, finally investing in energy-efficient jobs that can't be shipped overseas.

The Democratic plan is simple. It makes polluters pay and helps clean companies prosper so that they can hire more workers and we all know that that's what we need. It's the same American solution we put in place to successfully fight the acid rain in 1990, after which time electricity rates fell 10 percent and the U.S. economy added 16 million new jobs.

It's important to point out that the acid-rain solution was a bipartisan solution. My constituents in Los Angeles County don't want more rhetoric, they want solutions and specifics.

Consider what the Democratic energy plan will accomplish for this economy: Clean energy jobs provisions will create nearly 300,000 new jobs. The efficiency savings measures will create 222,000 new jobs by 2020. The clean energy jobs provisions will result in nearly \$100 billion in savings for consumers and businesses by 2030. The efficiency savings measures alone will result in nearly \$170 billion in utility bill savings by 2020.

□ 1045

The Democratic plan in this Congress will impact every facet of the lives of Americans. We must take care and craft a bill that will promote new job growth around this Nation, a bill that will have energy infrastructure to keep these jobs and industries alive in the United States for generations to come—we have learned that—and a bill that will promote our national and economic security.

The Democratic energy plan is a blueprint for legislation that the American people have called for, a change in a new direction. I look forward to working with my colleagues to moving America in that right direction and finally to true energy independence.

WHY IS NUCLEAR NOT INCLUDED?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, presently the majority is developing their own energy legislation through the Energy and Commerce Committee. I serve on the Subcommittee on Energy. We have had several hearings and many, many witnesses, including Vice President Gore. This legislation is entitled the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009. But, my colleagues, it imposes a massive national energy tax on every single American, especially those who are low income and elderly individuals.

Now, if reducing carbon dioxide, creating jobs and promoting domestic energy sources were truly their objective, then nuclear energy should be a central component, you would think, of this legislation. But it is not.

Nuclear power already provides the United States with over 20 percent of its electricity, and 73 percent of its CO₂-free electricity. When it comes to affordable, near-term reductions of CO₂ and other atmospheric emissions, the importance of nuclear energy cannot be overstated.

Like wind and solar energy, nuclear energy is emission free, which means CO₂ free. However, unlike wind and solar, nuclear energy can provide vast amounts of power on a constant basis. Wind and solar certainly have a role to